

workers have also not found it. Perhaps the factors leading to the recent expansion of this insect's range westward along the Himalaya will also cause it to be met in the Eastern Ghats, too.

For the future, it would be best to amend the distribution of this butterfly to read "Extends its range westward along the Himalaya in certain years from Nepal to Kumaon and probably as far as Himachal Pradesh."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am grateful to Alan Sharman for his notes, which he kindly made and sent me, and to the anonymous referees for their valuable suggestions.

March 2, 2000

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27. AMERICAN JOINTVETCH *AESCHYNOMENE AMERICANA* LINN. — A NEW LARVAL FOOD PLANT OF *TERIAS HECABE* LINN.

While working on the butterflies of the Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP), Mumbai, we came across a plant with a glandular hispid stem. At first, it appeared to be an insectivorous plant. We collected and identified it as *Aeschynomene americana* Linn. The Common Grass Yellow butterfly *Terias hecabe* Linn. lays eggs on this plant. We also collected a caterpillar feeding on the plant. The caterpillar pupated later, and the butterfly that emerged was identified as *Terias hecabe* Linn.

Aeschynomene americana (Linn.), commonly known as sensitive plant or American jointvetch, is a native of tropical America (Maheshwari and Paul 1975) and was introduced into India recently. It was first reported from Hazaribagh (Chatterjee 1960) and subsequently near Ranchi (Maheshwari and Paul 1975), both in Bihar State. Chandrabose and Srinivasan (1976) have reported this species from Kerala, Quilon district, Perundanaruvi. However, according to them it is a native of the West

Indies. In the FLORA OF MAHARASHTRA, Almeida (1999) has mentioned that the species has so far been collected from Thane and (the erstwhile) Colaba districts of Maharashtra. The present record is from Goregaon (East), in the vicinity of the SGNP. It is interesting to note that this intruder has come closer to the National Park area as the earlier distribution as recorded in the FLORA OF MAHARASHTRA is Khopoli and Vashi areas. Unless precautions are taken, it will become a major intruder into the area and disturb the growth of the native flora. I (NC) have observed that *Hyptis suaveolens*, commonly known as vilayati tulsi, has become a major threat to low growing plants like *Smithia sensitiva* and *Cassia tora*, *Cyanotis* and *Commelina* spp. which once grew profusely. However, both these plants i.e. *Aeschynomene americana* and *Hyptis suaveolens* are useful to butterflies, as the former is a new larval food plant for the Common Grass Yellow and the latter a source of nectar for many butterflies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank Mr. M.R. Almeida for identification of the plant and Mr. M.O. George for typing the manuscript.

November 24, 1999 NARESH CHATURVEDI
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28. MIGRATION OF THE COMMANDER BUTTERFLY
LIMENTIS PROCRIS (CRAMER)

In the forenoon of November 5, 1999, the first author (NC) observed a Commander Butterfly feeding on flowers of *Ixora* outside Hornbill House. I waited for some time to see whether the butterfly was in the vicinity and would return to feed on these flowers. However, there was no trace of the butterfly till evening. Subsequently, in the third week of November, I saw two of these butterflies feeding on *Lantana* flowers near Churchgate Station, Mumbai.

On November 25, 1999, one of us (VG) collected a caterpillar of the butterfly from a kadamb tree *Anthocephalus cadamba* growing within the boundary of Hornbill House. The caterpillar pupated on November 25, 1999 and the butterfly emerged on December 3, 1999. On a closer look at the kadamb tree, we found three more caterpillars, which were 3rd instars and pupated on December 12, 1999.

Earlier, a BNHS member, Mr. Kiran Srivastava informed us about the sighting of a Commander butterfly near Colaba Woods on December 28, 1998. According to him, the

butterfly seemed to have escaped from a predator, as the right hindwing was completely missing.

I have been monitoring butterfly migration in Mumbai and its vicinity over the last 10 years and have not come across the Commander butterfly in the city area. According to Wynter-Blyth (1957), this butterfly is a denizen of, though not exclusively confined to, thickly forested areas receiving heavy or moderate rain at an elevation of 305 to 1,220 m

It is interesting to note their presence in an urban built up area with heavy vehicular traffic. As these butterflies are seen only for a short time, they were possibly on migration. Though many Nymphalids are known to migrate, Williams (1930) does not mention this butterfly.

December 17, 1999 NARESH CHATURVEDI
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